ALBA White Board

ALBA Day Retreat

9 December 2023

Theme: 'I know you Mara' Led by Martin Evans Thank you friends for joining the retreat $\ ext{ constraint}$

For your reflection Here is the Soma Sutta - an example of how Mara appears in the Buddha's teachings:

Soma Sutta: Sutta Nipata 5.2 translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Bodhi © 1997

Then, in the morning, the bhikkhuni Soma dressed and, taking bowl and robe, entered Savatthi for alms. When she had walked for alms in Savatthi and had returned from her alms round, after her meal she went to the Blind Men's Grove for the day's abiding. Having plunged into the Blind Men's Grove, she sat down at the foot of a tree for the day's abiding.

Then Mara the Evil One, desiring to arouse fear, trepidation, and terror in the bhikkhuni Soma, desiring to make her fall away from concentration, approached her and addressed her in verse:

That state so hard to achieve Which is to be attained by the seers, Can't be attained by a woman With her two-fingered wisdom.b Then it occurred to the bhikkhuni Soma:

"Now who is this that recited the verse — a human being or a non-human being?"

Then it occurred to her: "This is Mara the Evil One, who has recited the verse desiring to arouse fear, trepidation, and terror in me, desiring to make me fall away from concentration."

Then the bhikkhuni Soma, having understood, "This is Mara the Evil One," replied to him in verses:

What does womanhood matter at all When the mind is concentrated well, When knowledge flows on steadily As one sees correctly into Dhamma.

One to whom it might occur, 'I'm a woman' or 'I'm a man' Or 'I'm anything at all' ----Is fit for Mara to address. Then Mara the Evil One, realising, "The bhikkhuni Soma knows me," sad and disappointed, disappeared right there.

And here is a talk given at Vesak this year by Ajahn Amaro. He talks about how Mara tried to tempt, frighten and trick the Buddha as he sought enlightenment

When the Weapons of Earth Turned to Flowers | Ajahn Amaro | 04.06.2023

Please share any reflections below - it would be lovely to hear from

Thank you everyone who joined the day. In the end we shared the blessings of our practice with Mara. When we understood Mara we felt compassion for him.

Martin